APPENDIX I.

[Vide answer to starred question No. 207 asked by Sri P. Rangaswami Reddiar at the meeting of the Legislative Assembly held on 10th December 1954, page 655 supra.]

On the 1st August 1953 the members of the Dravida Kazhagam conducted Anti-Hindi demonstrations by erasing Hindi characters from the name boards of several railway stations. Except at Virudunagar and Sattur these demonstrations were conducted peacefully.

On the morning of the 1st August 1953 a batch of Dravida Kazhagam volunteers entered upon the Virudunagar railway station platform with a view to erase the Hindi characters from the name boards. Their attempts to get near the boards were prevented by a batch of volunteers belonging to the local Youth Congress who had gathered there with the object of preventing any mischief being done to the boards. This led to an affray. The police who were on the spot arrested 14 persons—7 from each group and laid charge-sheets against them in the Court of the Additional First-class Magistrate, Virudunagar. All of them were convicted for an offence under section 160, Indian Penal Code. One of them was sentenced to undergo rigorous imprisonment for one month and the rest were sentenced to pay a fine of Rs. 10 each.

A similar case of affray occurred at Sattur railway station also the same day when a batch of Dravida Kazhagam volunteers, numbering 11, was prevented by another batch of local Youth Congress volunteers, numbering 14, from approaching the name boards. A clash ensued and to avoid a serious breach of the peace, the police arrested all the 25 persons involved in the incident and laid charge-sheets against them in the Court of the Stationary Sub-Magistrate, Sattur. When the report about the incident was received by Government, they felt that since the offences committed by the accused were not serious, the prosecutions could be dropped.

By this time, however, the 11 Dravida Kazhagam volunteers had pleaded guilty before the trying Magistrate who consequently sentenced each of them to a fine of Rs. 2 and in default to undergo simple imprisonment for two days. They having refused to pay the fine, the Magistrate committed them to prison and also issued distress warrants for the realisation of the fine amount. Hence while withdrawing the prosecution against the Youth Congress volunteers which was still pending disposal, Government directed that the State should not press for the realization of the fine amounts from the Kazhagam volunteers. Accordingly, the Court was moved to withdraw the distress warrants and it was good enough to do so.